DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 382 025 FL 022 928

AUTHOR	Convery, Anne; Coyle, Do
TITLE	Differentiation--Taking the Initiative. Pathfinder 18. A CILT Series for Language Teachers.
INSTITUTION	Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, London (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-1-874016-18-6
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	51p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, 20 Bedfordbury, Covent Garden, London WC2N 4LB, England, United Kingdom.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Techniques; *Computer Assisted Instruction; Foreign Countries; *Individual Differences; *Individualized Instruction; Information Technology; *Instructional Design; *Multilevel Classes (Second Language Instruction); Student Needs
IDENTIFIERS	Great Britain

ABSTRACT

Issues associated with differentiation of learner needs and instruction in second language teaching are discussed. Differentiation is distinguished from mixed-ability teaching in that the former places emphasis on the requirements of individual learners, while the latter concerns pupil management for teaching purposes. An introductory section examines the rationale for differentiation. The first chapter defines six types of differentiation: by text, support, outcome, ability, interest, and task. Chapter 2 looks at ways in which teachers can organize differentiated learning in the classroom, with minimal additional preparation, in each language skill area (speaking, listening, reading, writing). Some specific classroom procedures are suggested, with ideas for adjusting instruction in response to student behavior. The next chapter outlines classroom activities using computers to provide differentiated learning opportunities. These include word searches, matching games, language exercises--cloze, unjumbling, sequencing, etc., information-handling activities, multi-skill tasks, foreign language writing, desk top publishing, and use of CD-Rom resources. Chapter 4 explains some issues to be addressed in making differentiated instruction an integral part of the teacher's repertoire, including departmental organization, planning, classroom management, instructional resources, and assessment. The role of differentiation in Britain's National Curriculum is discussed in chapter 5, and chapter 6 looks at the role of differentiation in developing learner autonomy. Contains 17 key titles and sources. (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 382 025

A CILT series for language teachers

Pathfinder

Differentiation – taking the initiative

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. E. Hawkins

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Anne Convery &
Do Coyle

FL022928

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Pathfinder 18

A CILT series for language teachers

Differentiation - taking the initiative

Anne Convery and Do Coyle

CiLT

Other titles in the PATHFINDER series:

Reading for pleasure in a foreign language (Ann Swarbrick)
Yes - but will they behave? Managing the interactive classroom (Susan Halliwell)
On target - teaching in the target language (Susan Halliwell and Barry Jones)
Communication re-activated: teaching pupils with learning difficulties (Bernardette Holmes)
Bridging the gap: GCSE to 'A' level (John Thorogood and Lid King)
Making the case for languages (Alan Moys and Richard Townsend)
Languages home and away (Alison Taylor)
Being creative (Barry Jones)
Departmental planning and schemes of work (Clive Hurren)
Progressing through the Attainment Targets (Ian Lane)
Fair enough? Equal opportunities and modern languages (Vee Harris)
Continuous assessment and recording (John Thorogood)
Improve your image: the effective use of the OHP (Daniel Tierney and Fay Humphreys)
Not bothered? Motivating reluctant language learners in Key Stage 4 (Jenifer Alison)
Grammar matters (Susan Halliwell)

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to teachers working in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire schools and to our PGCE students 1991-92, for their ideas and inspiration. In particular, we should like to thank Les Churchman, Bryn Rourke and our colleague Philip Hood, for their practical help and guidance throughout.

First published 1993
Copyright © 1993 Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
ISBN 1 874016 18 6

Cover by Logos Design and Advertising
Printed in Great Britain by Oakdale Printing Co Ltd

Published by Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, 20 Bedfordbury, London WC2N 4LB

All rights reserved. No part of the publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Copyright owner.

Contents

		Page
Introduction: Why differentiation?		1
1.	Types of differentiation	3
2.	Getting started	6
3.	Developing differentiated tasks with IT	13
4.	Keeping going	23
5.	Differentiation and the National Curriculum	31
6.	Moving forwards: differentiation and pupil autonomy	35
To conclude		43
Key titles and sources		44

Foreword

In writing this Pathfinder, we set out to put down on paper our collective thoughts on differentiated language learning. These ideas have been developed as a result of many, many months of discussion, of being encouraged and inspired by observing teachers and pupils in action and of having to respond to our students' pertinent questions and practical concerns.

The Pathfinder gives a simple overview of some of the major and complex issues associated with differentiated language learning. It plots a straightforward route through our thinking, from getting started to keeping going and moving on.

We wanted to share these ideas with a wider audience in the hope that readers will be encouraged to develop, change and improve upon our suggestions and be reassured that it is possible for all teachers to provide differentiated learning opportunities, whatever their circumstances.

In this way, we all contribute to the familiar process of moving our thinking and practice forwards!

Anne Convery
Do Coyle

Introduction: Why differentiation?

There is nothing new in the idea of differentiation. By aiming to provide pupils with appropriate work at differing levels, teachers are extending and developing some of the well-rehearsed principles of mixed ability teaching:

> *'The curriculum has to satisfy two seemingly contrary requirements. On the one hand it has to reflect the broad aims of education which hold good for all children, whatever their capabilities and whatever the schools they attend. On the other hand it has to allow for differences in the abilities, aptitudes and needs of children, even of the same age. If it is to be effective, the school curriculum must allow for differences.'*
>
> (Adapted from *A View of the Curriculum*, HMI discussion document, HMSO 1980)

Whilst mixed-ability teaching and differentiation share some common ground, there is a clear distinction between the two terms. Mixed-ability teaching is more concerned with pupil management for teaching purposes, whereas differentiation places the emphasis fairly and squarely on the requirements of individual learners, whether they be in streamed, setted or mixed-ability groupings.

The concept of differentiation is open to wide interpretation. It does, however, seem to be a necessity in order to identify and meet the needs of every pupil in the classroom. It is the **entitlement** of every learner to have his/her individual needs and abilities catered for, and the teacher's **responsibility** to find effective ways of managing those needs and abilities and to match them to appropriate teaching and learning styles. This is where differentiation has a vital role to play.

Differentiation is the process by which teachers provide opportunities for pupils to achieve their potential, working at their own pace through a variety of relevant learning activities.

The National Curriculum clearly focuses on the individual. It encourages and values individual differences by ensuring that activities are well matched to the age and abilities of learners. It also emphasises individual performance, and the statements of attainment provide a means of identifying individual attainment levels.

> *'Whether pupils are taught in sets or mixed-ability groups, there will be a range of attainment and interests. The presence of bilingual pupils and pupils with SEN further widens the range of language attainment in a class. Differentiation is essential if all pupils are to have the opportunities to achieve their full potential. Differentiation is linked to progression. An understanding of the main features of progression in*

ATs and PoS and detailed knowledge of pupils' attainment in each AT will help teachers plan work which matches the needs of individual pupils.'

(*Modern Foreign Languages Non-Statutory Guidance*, NCC 1992)

Although the challenges of differentiation might appear in some ways daunting, the ideas contained in this Pathfinder work on the principle of 'starting small'. Differentiation does not necessarily mean abandoning existing materials but rather building on current practice - to involve teachers in making decisions regarding **core work** (generally regarded as suitable for **all** pupils) and **branching work** - which will take account of individual goals, interests and abilities. After all:

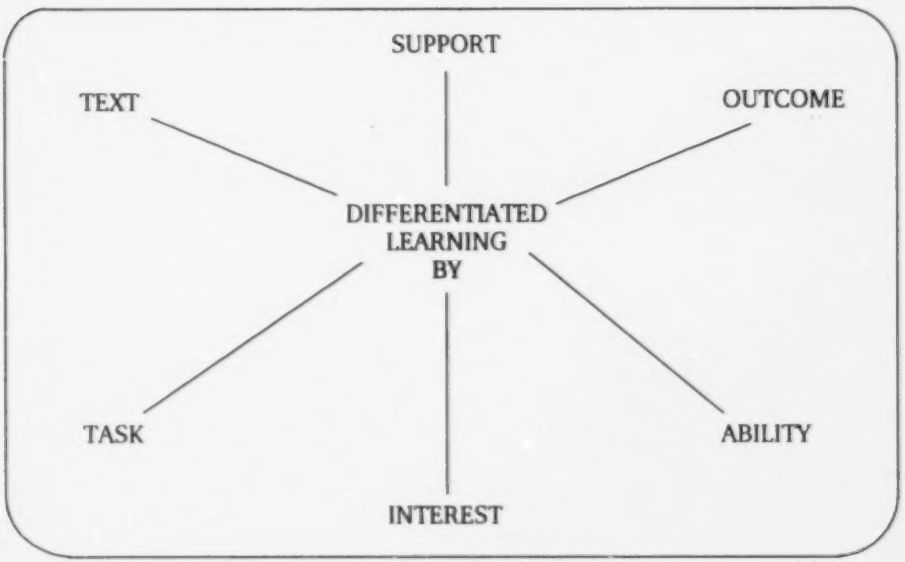
'The setting of different tasks to different pupils does not have to take place all the time.'

(*The Effective Teacher of Modern Languages*, Colin Wringe 1989)

In Chapter 1 we will look at different types of differentiation.

1. Types of differentiation

There is a variety of ways in which differentiation can be achieved, as illustrated in the diagram below:



Although there is a degree of overlap between the different categories, each type could be defined as follows:

★ **By text**
Learners work with spoken or written materials, (referred to as text in the National Curriculum and other sources) at different levels of difficulty on the same subject or topic area. The teacher thus ensures that all learners cover the same ground, whilst at the same time matching different levels of complexity to pupils' differing needs. For example, an authentic recording of a weather forecast may be appropriate for the most able learners in a group, whereas a commercially-produced cassette recording of an 'imaginary' weather forecast may be more suited to other learners in the group. Similarly, an article from an authentic newspaper or magazine could be used by more able learners, whilst other learners use an article from a coursebook, which could be further adapted by the teacher to support the weaker learners if necessary. An appropriate text can always be written or recorded by the teacher and/or foreign language assistant if one cannot be found in existing resources.

★ **By support**

The teacher can ensure that differentiation takes place by the amount of additional support offered to learners of all abilities in terms of time, materials and tasks. This may involve the presence of a support or a special needs teacher or foreign language assistant who works alongside specific groups of pupils during the lesson. In some schools, sixth-form foreign language students offer additional help in lower school lessons. Alternatively, whilst learners are working in groups or individually, the teacher is freed to work with a small group (reinforcing a point already covered, for example) or with any individual learner who needs further help or encouragement.

However, support does not necessarily have to be in the form of extra teachers or helpers in the room, as in many cases this would not be achievable. Differentiation by support can be provided in a variety of ways, involving materials and tasks. For example, if pupils are working independently on a task with instructions in the target language, a support card can be prepared by the teacher to which pupils can refer without having to go directly to the teacher. The card might be in the form of a checklist, containing symbols or even some English when appropriate! Other forms of support include wall displays, posters, mobiles and personal cassettes with common classroom instructions, useful phrases, new vocabulary, numbers and so on, as an ever-present reminder to which pupils can refer if and when necessary.

★ **By outcome**

Learners are all engaged in the same task but produce widely differing end results. For example, when working on a differentiated worksheet, some pupils may complete one or two of the tasks, ticking boxes or completing gap-filling exercises, whereas other pupils may work quickly through the initial tasks and tackle the more open-ended tasks at the end. Alternatively, when learners are required to write a letter to a pen-friend the teacher can expect results ranging from a few lines of factual information through to a more substantial piece of a descriptive and imaginative nature. It is important that all learners feel that their work is valued by the teacher, for example, that they all have an opportunity to display their work in the classroom. In this respect, the use of IT can help in terms of presentation, for however simple or complex the piece of work, all work being displayed can look neat and be legible if it has been wordprocessed.

★ **By ability**

Learners are grouped by ability for teaching and learning purposes. This could be across a year group (setting) or within one class. Work is then organised to match the ability and needs of each group/class. There is some overlap here with differentiation by text. This arrangement may be of use if the teacher wishes a particular group of learners to study something which would not be

appropriate for all the learners (a more complex point of grammar, for example).

★ **By interest**
Learners are allowed to pursue something which interests them personally, and are given a degree of choice, or 'guided' choice in selecting activities. This could involve choice in the use of equipment (listening station, video, computer, Concept Keyboard), choice in the skill involved (listening, speaking, reading, writing) or choice in the topic or subject matter. Learners who are given the opportunity to study something they are really interested in will be more highly motivated, and hopefully this will have a knock-on effect in other areas of their work. If the teacher organises a selection of activities for a particular lesson, and stipulates the minimum number to be completed by each individual by the end of the lesson, learners can then work at their own pace on their selected tasks. More able learners will complete more tasks, and may be motivated by the freedom of choice to complete all the tasks.

★ **By task**
Learners may be working on the same text, but the tasks they are required to do can be graded in difficulty and matched to differing needs and abilities. For example, when all learners in a group are working on a reading activity, the less-able learners can be supported by tasks which do not require them to understand every word, but rather the gist of what they read. The more able learners can be asked more searching questions. Similarly, when engaged in a listening activity, the less able learners may be required to identify only a minimum amount of information, whereas more able learners could be set a more open-ended task.

Having examined the various definitions, the following chapter will give you some strategies for getting started, with reference to simple examples for immediate use in the classroom.

2. Getting started

Introducing differentiation into the teaching and learning of a foreign language need not be a daunting task. In the first instance, it does not necessarily involve the teacher in the production of masses of new materials, or in a radical change in teaching style. Indeed, many teachers who have not previously considered the concept of differentiation may find on closer examination of their teaching styles that they have been instinctively using differentiation without acknowledging it.

In this chapter we aim to look at ways in which teachers can organise differentiated learning in the classroom in a straightforward way, involving little or no additional work in terms of preparation. The ideas and suggestions which follow can be put into immediate practice.

Speaking skills

QUESTION AND ANSWER

As many lessons begin in this way, it is simple for the teacher to operate a differentiated form of questioning, and allow pupils to respond to questions appropriate to their own level of ability. Thus, at the basic level, a learner who responds with either a nod or shake of the head is demonstrating that he or she has understood the question. At the other end of the spectrum, open-ended questions will extend the most able learners. A teacher who is a skilful questioner will be able to mix up question types and carefully direct them to pupils in an appropriate manner. The following table contains some suggested questions, possible responses and comments on their type and usage:

QUESTION	POSSIBLE RESPONSES	COMMENTS
Tu aimes le fromage?	Nod/shake of head. *Oui/Non.* *Oui, j'aime le fromage.* *Non, je n'aime pas le fromage.*	Non verbal response possible. Minimum manipulation required. Repetition of words supplied in question.
Tu préfères le fromage ou le jambon?	*Le fromage/le jambon.* *Je préfère le fromage.* *Je préfère le jambon.*	One/two word(s) answer possible. Pupils have to choose answer from two possibilities given in question. Very little manipulation.
Tu manges du pain le matin?	*Non/Oui.* *Je mange du pain le matin.* *Je mange du pain à midi.*	One-word answer acceptable. Longer utterances using repetition or new information can be encouraged.

QUESTION	POSSIBLE RESPONSES	COMMENTS
Qu'est-ce que tu manges le matin?	*Je mange des céréales ...*	A more open type of question but possible answers are restricted. Learners can begin to personalise their replies.
Qu'est-ce que tu aimes manger?	*J'aime les champignons, les hamburgers, le curry et la glace à la fraise.*	Open-ended question - pupils could offer one or many items in response, depending on their personal preference and based on reality.
Qu'est-ce que tu choisirais dans un restaurant français? (en regardant le menu)	*J'aimerais goûter ...* *... le cassoulet.* *... la choucroute.* *... le magret de canard.*	Open-ended question encouraging imaginative and creative responses.

Skilful handling of differentiated questioning depends largely on the teacher's knowledge of individual learners and their abilities, and on his/her relationship with the learners. If these two criteria are established, the teacher can direct the questions effectively, allowing the more confident and able pupils to model answers first before requiring less confident learners to answer by reproducing an answer already heard. To help learners answer questions:

- use question types randomly, so that there is no obvious move from 'easy' to more demanding questions;
- be generous and fair in use of praise and encouragement, so that learners will realise that all responses are valued by the teacher;
- handle mistakes and wrong answers sensitively in order to create a climate in which learners can, and want to, operate according to their differing abilities.

PAIR WORK

Differentiation can be achieved by organising learners to work with partners of the same, or similar, ability as themselves. Whatever the task set, or stimulus given, if a time limit is set by the teacher, or if a check is made to find out where learners are in the exercise, then pupils can work at their own pace. Able pupils will cover more ground and may complete the whole task in the allotted time, whereas less able pupils will not be under pressure to keep up with their peers.

On the other hand, less able pupils also need opportunities to complete set tasks, with resulting 'job satisfaction', so it is important to vary the ways in which pair work is organised. If no time limit is set, then more able pupils will need extending once they have covered the main, or core, task. This can be done in a variety of ways by:

- exchanging of roles;
- encouraging pupils to make up their own examples;

- introducing problem-solving elements ('tell your partner that you don't have what he or she has just asked for');
- encouraging unpredictability - pupils can differentiate themselves and this helps more able pupils to cope with the unexpected.

Listening skills

Almost any listening exercise which is provided on a cassette accompanying a commercial course can be differentiated by the teacher, if it has not already been done by the author. Two simple ways are:

ADDING SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Learners listen for additional information (such as other words, new expressions, interesting points) once the set exercise has been completed. This type of activity can be carried out as a whole-class activity using one cassette recorder and is not dependent, therefore, on the acquisition of more sophisticated equipment.

USING A GRID TO RECORD INFORMATION

Pupils are asked to add information to one column at a time, during successive listenings to the extract.

For example, with reference to the topic of train travel, many course cassettes (in any language) contain recordings of station announcements (destination of trains, departure times, platform numbers and so on), which can be adapted to make a differentiated task. Thus a simple worksheet could be devised in any language as follows:

A	B	C	D
DESTINATION	DEPARTURE TIME	PLATFORM	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

The first column could be the core material which all pupils should attempt to complete, with the subsequent columns to be filled according to the learners' abilities. The final column might only be attempted by the most able learners in the class, and is designed to be open-ended. The above table could even be written up on a board, or on an overhead transparency, one column at a time,

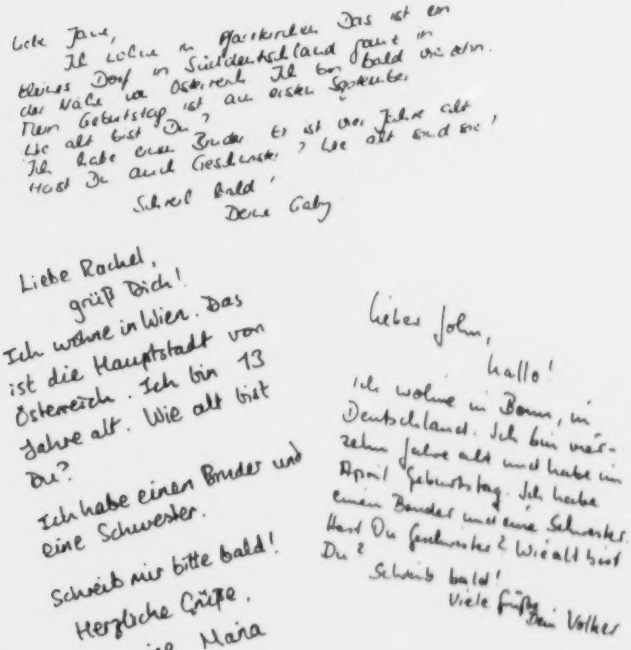
each time the tape is replayed, with pupils moving on to the next column when they feel ready. Alternatively, this type of task could be developed into a jig-saw listening activity, so that each column of information could be completed by a certain group of pupils, pre-selected by the teacher. A group of less able pupils could complete column A, and so on, with the most able pupils trying to complete column D. When the grid part of the task has been completed, learners could be divided into groups of four, each group containing an A, B, C and D listener. The activity could then develop into an information gap oral exercise as pupils have to swop information in order to complete the whole grid.

Reading skills

Two simple ways of differentiating a written text are:

- modify the text;
- modify the task.

This means that reading tasks from coursebooks can be used with the minimum amount of extra work required to make them accessible to a greater range of pupils. In the following example, from *Zickzack* Book 1, pupils are required to read three handwritten letters in German and to answer questions on them. It is not immediately clear to which letter the questions refer, so pupils have to search each letter for the correct answers.



Liebe Rachel,
grüß Dich!
Ich wohne in Wien. Das ist die Hauptstadt von Österreich. Ich bin 13 Jahre alt. Wie alt bist Du?
Ich habe einen Bruder und eine Schwester.
Schreib mir bitte bald!
Herzliche Grüße,
deine Maria

Lieber John,
Hallo!
Ich wohne in Bonn, in Deutschland. Ich bin zehn Jahre alt und habe im April Geburtstag. Ich habe einen Bruder und eine Schwester. Hast Du Geschwister? Wie alt bist Du?
Schreib bald!
Viele Grüße
Dein Volker

Fragen

1 When is Volker's birthday?
2 How many brothers and sisters does he have?
3 Give three details about Pfarrkirchen.
4 What happens on September 1st, according to Gaby?
5 What does Gaby tell us about her family?
6 What does Maria tell Rachel about where she lives?
7 What does she tell Rachel to do at the end of her letter?
8 How many different questions are asked in the three letters, and what do they mean?
9 What would you write at the end of a letter in German if you wanted your penfriend to reply quickly?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

An exercise such as this might be suitable for more able pupils. It may need to be modified in order to be accessible to all pupils in a mixed-ability class. In the example below, the three texts have been wordprocessed, in order to remove any difficulty pupils might have in understanding authentic handwriting. Each text has its own set of questions, which themselves are graded in difficulty, moving from the specific to those which are more open-ended. When this example was used with a class, not all pupils were required to complete all three letters. The more able pupils, having completed the whole task, were then very keen to look at the texts as set in the coursebook, and to tackle the accompanying questions.

Lies die Briefe und beantworte die Fragen
Read the letters and answer in English

1

Liebe Rachel,

grüß Dich!

Ich wohne in Wien. Das ist die Haupstadt von Österreich. Ich bin 13 Jahre alt. Wie alt bist Du?
Ich habe einen Bruder und eine Schwester.

Schreib mir bitte bald!
Herzliche Grüße,
Deine Maria

1. How many brothers/sisters does Maria have?
2. Which question does Maria ask?
3. What else can you find out in the letter?

2

Lieber John,

hallo!

Ich wohne in Bonn, in Deutschland. Ich bin vierzehn Jahre alt und habe im April Geburtstag. Ich habe einen Bruder und eine Schwester. Hast Du Geschwister? Wie alt bist Du?

Schreib bald!
Viele Grüße,
Dein Volker

1. How many brothers/sisters does Volker have?
2. Which questions does Volker ask?
3. How old is Volker?
4. What else can you find out in the letter?

3

Liebe Jane,

Ich wohne in Pfarrkirchen. Das ist ein kleines Dorf in Süddeutschland ganz in der Nähe von Österreich. Ich bin bald vierzehn. Mein Geburtstag ist am ersten September. Wie alt bist du? Ich habe einen Bruder. Er ist vier Jahre alt. Hast Du Geschwister? Wie alt sind sie?

Schreib bald! *Deine Gaby*

1. What does Gaby say about her family?
2. What does she ask Jane?
3. What do we find out about where she lives?
4. What else do we know about her?

Writing skills

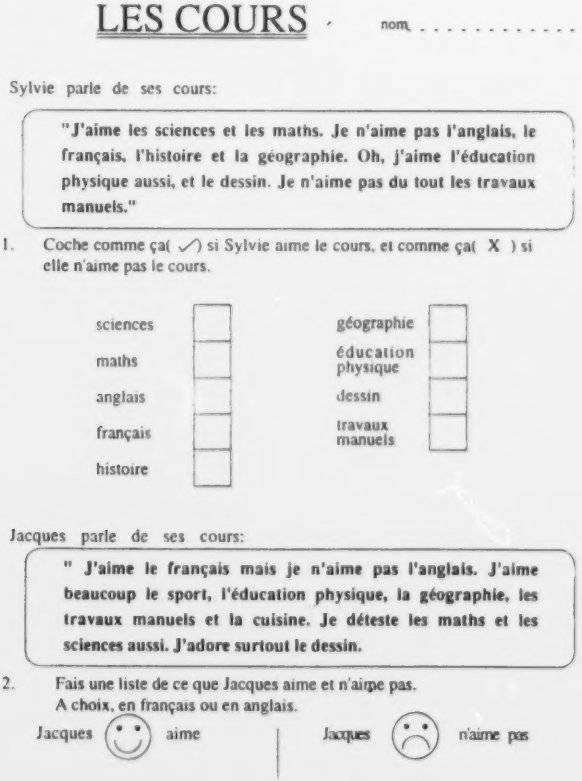
Two straightforward ways of catering for the differing levels of learners' written skills are:

- valuing differentiated outcomes (see Chapter 1, p4);
- worksheets.

Below is an example of a differentiated worksheet where tasks are graded in difficulty, for use in a whole class situation:

- Task 1 requires learners to put a tick or a cross in boxes;
- Task 2 requires learners to make a list, in either French or English;
- Task 3 requires learners to complete sentences by filling gaps;
- Task 4 requires learners to write sentences based on a model;
- Task 5 requires learners to write their own sentences and is open-ended.

Learners could work through the sheet at their own pace. Not all learners would be expected to complete all the tasks.



LES COURS nom . . . . . .

Sylvie parle de ses cours:

"J'aime les sciences et les maths. Je n'aime pas l'anglais, le français, l'histoire et la géographie. Oh, j'aime l'éducation physique aussi, et le dessin. Je n'aime pas du tout les travaux manuels."

1. Coche comme ça(✓) si Sylvie aime le cours, et comme ça(X) si elle n'aime pas le cours.

sciences		géographie	
maths		éducation physique	
anglais		dessin	
français		travaux manuels	
histoire			

Jacques parle de ses cours:

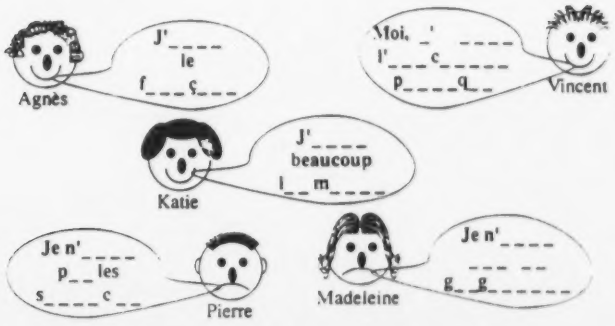
" J'aime le français mais je n'aime pas l'anglais. J'aime beaucoup le sport, l'éducation physique, la géographie, les travaux manuels et la cuisine. Je déteste les maths et les sciences aussi. J'adore surtout le dessin.

2. Fais une liste de ce que Jacques aime et n'aime pas.
A choix, en français ou en anglais.

Jacques aime | Jacques n'aime pas

LES COURS (suite)

3. Voici des jeunes français qui parlent de leurs cours.
Remplis les blancs.



4. Invente deux exemples toi-même:

5. Et toi ? Ecris quelques phrases sur ce que tu aimes et n'aimes pas- sois honnête!

eg. J'aime l'anglais. Je n'aime pas les maths.

We have looked at ways in which teachers can begin to address the issue of differentiation, and the ideas and examples referred to are all practical ways forward which can be adopted without a radical change in teaching style or classroom management. Everyone should aim to **start small**, by targeting one class to begin with, in order to monitor and evaluate, as in an action research model. The very fact of being aware of the need for differentiation in the classroom, of recognising that an average class is made up of 25-30 individuals with differing needs and abilities and of valuing the contributions made by all pupils is an important first step in getting started.

3. Developing differentiated tasks with IT

IT is one resource amongst many which can support and enhance pupils' learning. It enables teachers to adapt simple and more complex language tasks alike to suit the different abilities of their pupils. We take as our starting point various classroom activities which could provide differentiated learning opportunities and go on to show how they can be enhanced by using IT as a support. For those who are already experienced users or for those wishing to experiment further, we recommend the books in the bibliography which will provide clear instructions and know-how.

Wordsearches

Both pupil- and teacher-generated wordsearches have great potential as differentiated vocabulary puzzles. The teacher could

- use the same wordsearch for all pupils: differentiation would be by outcome or speed.;
- give pupils different puzzles based on the same topic (or a variety of topics for revision): differentiatiation would be by level of vocabulary and/or the number of words;
- ask pupils to create wordsearches for each other based on
  - vocabulary to be learned (e.g. select up to 20 words from a list of 40)
  - vocabulary and spellings to be reinforced (either for an individual pupil or the whole class)
  - homework or revision
  - personal interest activities.

By using a software package, wordsearches can be created much more quickly, thus allowing for a more profitable use of time.

WORDSQUARE, for example, will create wordsearches (by pupils and teachers) at different levels ranging from all words appearing horizontally to words appearing in different directions. Pupils still need to go through the important stage of concentrating on the spelling of the vocabulary as it is being typed into the computer, but the puzzle itself is composed within seconds.

In the following example, a wordsearch has been created on four different levels based on the topic 'places in a town'. The same 22 items of vocabulary are used for each level; it is the way in which they are arranged which provides the differentiation:

The hidden words are as follows:

BUSHALTESTELLE	JUGENDHERBERGE	CAMPINGPLATZ	UBAHNSTATION
VERKEHRSAMT	STADTMITTE	SPORTPLATZ	SCHWIMMBAD
TOILETTE	RATHAUS	THEATER	AUSGANG
EINGANG	BAHNHOF	POLIZEI	MUSEUM
SCHULE	KINO	PARK	POST
DOM	ZOO		

Level 1 has all words running horizontally from left to right.

Answer sheet

```
. . B U S H A L T E S T E L L E . . . .
J U G E N D H E R B E R G E . . . . . .
. . . S C H U L E . . . . R A T H A U S
P O L I Z E I . . . . . .
. . . . K I N O . M U S E U M . . . . .
. . . . . Z O O . . . . .
. . E I N G A N G . . . . . D O M . .
. T H E A T E R . . . . . .
. S P O R T P L A T Z . . . . . P O S T
. T O I L E T T E . . . . . .
. . . . . V E R K E H R S A M T . . . .
. . . . . A U S G A N G .
. . P A R K . . . . . .
C A M P I N G P L A T Z . . . . . .
. . . . . B A H N H O F . . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . U B A H N S T A T I O N . . .
. . . . . S C H W I M M B A D . . . . .
. . . . . S T A D T M I T T E . . . .
```

Level 2 has most words running vertically, with some horizontally from left to right.

Answer sheet

```
. . . . . V T . R . . . . . .
. . . . . E O . A . . . . . .
. . . . . P R I U T . . . . . A .
. . . . . A K L B H . . J . . D . U .
. S . . . . R E E A A P . U . . O . S .
. C . . C . K H T H U O . G . . M S G .
. H . . A . . R T N S L . E . . . C A .
. W . . M . . S E S M I . N . . S H N .
. I . . P . . A . T U Z . D . S P U G .
. M P . I . . M . A S E . H . T O L . .
. M O . N . . T . T E I . E . A R E . .
. B S . G . Z . . I U . . R . D T . . .
. A T . P . O . . O M . . B . T P T . .
. D . . L . O . . N . . . E . M L H . .
. . . . A . . . . . . . K R . I A E . .
. . . . T B A H N H O P I G . T T A . .
. . . . Z . . . . . N E . T Z T . .
. . . . . O . . E . E . .
. . . B U S H A L T E S T E L L E R . .
. . . . . E I N G A N G .
```

Level 3 has words running vertically, horizontally and diagonally.

Answer sheet

```
. . . . . P O L I Z E I . . . . . .
P . E T T E L I O T . . . . . .
A . G . . . . . . . . . . . . . M .
R . R . . . E . . C . M . . . . . U . .
K . E . . . L S . A . O E . . . E . . .
. . B . . . U P . M . D L . . S . . . .
. . R . . . H O . P . . L . U C . . . .
. . E E . . C R . I . . E M . H . . . .
. . H T . . S T . N . . T . . W . . . .
V . D T . . . P . G . . S . . I . . . .
E . N I . . B L . P . . E . . M G . . .
R . E M . . A A . L . . T . . M N . . .
K . G T R . H T K A . . L . . B A . . .
E . U D E . N Z I T . . A . . A G . . .
H . J A T . H . N Z . . H . . D N . . .
R O . T A . O . O . T . S . . . I . . .
S . O S E . F . . S . . U . . . E . . .
A . . Z H . . . O . . . B . . . . . .
M . . . T . . P G N A G S U A . . . . .
T S U A H T A R U B A H N S T A T I O N
```

Similarly, with crosswords in CROSSWORD CALL UP, the teacher can tap in a set of clues and allocate to each a level of difficulty. Crosswords at different levels can easily be created using the same topic material.

Matching activities

Activities which require pupils to match one set of items with another are commonplace in the languages classroom, e.g.

- ★ matching pictures with words/phrases
- ★ matching vocabulary items in two languages
- ★ matching sentence openings with endings.

However, such activities can be more fully exploited and more easily differentiated by using IT to support them. Those teachers who have access to a Concept Keyboard* to use with a computer might wish to experiment with packages such as CONCEPT MATCH (Blue file). This can be used to match pictures, words or phrases on the keyboard with messages on the screen. The teacher has the flexibility to differentiate by creating both the overlays for the keyboard and the screen messages at different levels of complexity. (See example of TOUTES DIRECTIONS/TOUCH EXPLORER PLUS, page 19)

If the Concept Keyboard is used with a word bank, it enables all pupils to create imaginative written tasks, which can gradually build up from picture sequencing to complex poetry writing. Indeed, if typing in words on a normal keyboard is a slow process for some pupils, then using a word bank (which in itself can be simple or complex) with a Concept Keyboard will dramatically speed up the process and will help to motivate pupils.

Sample of cloze text displayed on screen with the wordbank on the Concept Keyboard overlay. Pupils move the words and insert them into the text. The word bank can easily become a 'phrase' bank.

Ma maison

Le salon est _____ . Dans le salon il y a _____ , _____ et _____ .

Ma chambre est _____ . Dans ma chambre il y a _____ , _____ et _____ .

grand	un tapis
grande	une table
petit	un lit
petite	une chaîne hi-fi
un téléviseur	une commode
un canapé	une étagère
des chaises	une armoire

* The Concept Keyboard has until recently been thought of more as an enabling device for the least able. However, as teachers experiment more, it is clear that the keyboard can be of great use with pupils of all abilities.

Language exercises - cloze, unjumbling, sequencing, etc

Language exercises used in class are often based on stimulus from a textbook or printed material, which might not always cater for the different abilities of the pupils or be entirely appropriate in content. By using an authoring package, teachers have the flexibility to create language exercises quickly and effectively using the computer and base them on their own short texts or stimulus geared to their own pupils' needs.

For example, FUN WITH TEXTS (Camsoft) allows teachers (or pupils) to have full control over the type and level of text(s) available. It is straightforward to create short texts on the same topic but at different levels. In addition, differentiation is built into the problem-solving options available, using the same text. Such programs allow created texts to be transformed into problem-solving activities such as text reconstruction, gap filling, sequencing and decoding. Authoring means that the teacher can ensure that the content is meaningful and the level is appropriate. These packages provide instant feedback and differentiate by time available and support provided as well as level of difficulty.

Ma journée

Le matin je descends à la cuisine à sept heures et demie pour manger le petit déjeuner. Puis à huit heures je vais à l'école. Je reste à l'école pour le déjeuner. Je mange à la cantine avec mes amis à midi.

L'après-midi je rentre à la maison à trois heures et demie. Je prends le goûter, une tartine avec de la confiture. Je prends aussi du chocolat ou de l'eau minérale.

Le soir je fais mes devoirs entre six et sept heures, et je vais au lit à neuf heures et quart.

This example from DRAGONFILE shows a short text which has been transformed by the program into two gapped texts, one with nineteen gaps for more able pupils and the other with twelve gaps for the less able pupils. Another way of differentiating with this type of activity is to vary the length of time pupils are allowed to study the original text before starting the gap-filling exercise.

Ma journée

Le matin je descends à la __1__ à sept heures et __2__ pour manger le petit __3__ . Puis à huit heures __4__ vais à l'école. __5__ reste à l'école __6__ le déjeuner. Je mange __7__ la cantine avec mes amis à midi.

L'après- __9__ je rentre à la __10__ à trois heures et __11__ . Je prends le goûter, __12__ tartine avec de la __13__ . Je prends aussi du __14__ ou de l'eau __15__ .

Le soir je fais __16__ devoirs entre six et __17__ heures, et je vais __18__ lit à neuf heures __19__ quart.

Ma journée

Le matin je descends à la cuisine à sept ___1___ et demie pour manger le petit déjeuner. ___2___ à huit heures je vais à l' ___3___ . Je reste à l'école pour le ___4___ . Je mange à la cantine avec mes ___5___ à midi. L'après midi je rentre ___6___ la maison à trois heures et demie. ___7___ prends le goûter, une tartine avec de ___8___ confiture. Je prends aussi du chocolat ou ___9___ l'eau minérale. Le soir je fais ___10___ devoirs entre six et sept heures, et ___11___ vais au lit à neuf heures et ___12___ .

Another type of activity which could be used to follow up or reinforce the previous one is shown below, as a transcript of what appears on the screen. Pupils are required to reconstruct the text by renumbering the lines.

Ma journée

1. *Je prends le goûter, une tartine*
2. *Le soir je fais mes devoirs entre*
3. *le petit déjeuner. Puis à huit*
4. *Le matin je descends à la cuisine*
5. *maison à trois heures et demie*
6. *à sept heures et demie pour manger*
7. *avec de la confiture. Je prends*
8. *lit à neuf heures et quart.*
9. *heures je vais à l'école. Je reste*
10. *midi.*
11. *minérale*
12. *à l'école pour le déjeuner. Je*
13. *mange à la cantine avec mes amis à*
14. *l'après-midi je rentre à la*
15. *six et sept heures, et je vais au*
16. *aussi du chocolat ou de l'eau*

Information handling activities

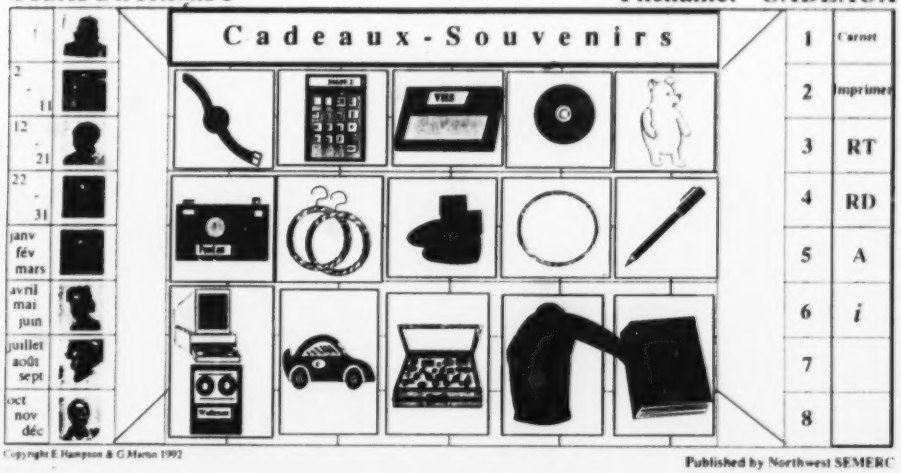
Pupils spend a large proportion of their time in foreign language classrooms engaged in information handling activities. Ranging from question and answer routines and comprehension work using authentic texts to carrying out surveys and using databases - the list is endless since these tasks are rooted in communication. It is of particular interest then to modern languages teachers to become familiar with some information handling activities which can be differentiated and supported by IT.

TOUCH EXPLORER PLUS is a sophisticated information handling package operating at up to six different levels. Each square or group of squares on the

Concept Keyboard can contain up to six different messages. Therefore, a series of overlays could involve pupils in activities which gradually become more challenging - or different overlays can be targeted at different groups of pupils. For instance, when devising a guided tour of a town, the overlay of a shopping centre can provide information at successive levels about shops, items sold, offers, prices, conversations and so on. The program can also be exploited for sequencing activities such as instructions or recipes, and give information ranging from simple to complex. A simple school timetable could provide graded responses from one word to complete sentences, for example from: *Deutsch* to *Ich habe montags um zwei Uhr Deutsch.*

It is possible to purchase some ready made differentiated overlays, such as *Toutes directions* which supports the French course *Route nationale* but can also be used independently.

Route Nationale
Toutes Directions 5 **Filename: CADEAUX**



Copyright E Hampson & G Marton 1992

Published by Northwest SEMERC

The overlays have been designed to provide differentiated tasks (by text and outcome). Pupils can choose the level at which they work. The example shows eight young people and some typical birthday presents.

RT (Level 1) gives the names of the items and is a picture/word matching exercise.
RD (Level 2) concentrates on who the presents are for and from.
AT (Level 3) provides additional information about the items such as cost and material.
Level 4 (i) is the help level providing additional information and support such as meanings to words/phrases.

Pupils can easily move from level to level. Alternatively, by using whitener, the teacher could blank out the choice squares, to ensure that different pupils work at different levels but using the same stimulus. If used with a BBC computer, texts created by pupils can be put into the notebook (CARNET) and transferred to the wordprocessor. Follow-up activities based on text manipulation could allow for further differentiated tasks (ranging from selecting keywords to changing the third person singular into the first) and the texts can be printed (IMPRIMER). TOUCH EXPLORER PLUS can also be programmed to provide different types of information to serve as a simple database.

Other database packages such as ML FIND (NCET) or GRASS (Newman) are also very flexible. Pupils can use them in a simple way to retrieve data or information, or in a more complex way to create their own databases. Ready made data files are available such as DYNAMIQUE INFORMATIQUE.

Response activities which require pupils to use the information lend themselves in particular to differentiation by task, as in the following example:

Data: items handed in at a lost property office in a particular week.
Pupils could:
- identify objects by matching 'photographs' with data;
- fill in a simple grid;
- fill in a complex grid;
- write a report giving details of specific lost items;
- develop dialogues between claimant and employee.

As teachers become more confident using databases, they can encourage pupils to create their own, based on their own data collection. One example would be a class survey of leisure activities. The teacher creates fields and agrees field names with pupils - *sport*, *lecture*, *cinéma*, *danse*, etc. ML FIND supports foreign characters and has the useful facility of allowing data to be entered as pre-set choices. Data collected could be the result of different activities. Some pupils write words or phrases, others numbers or symbols - a database has the potential to give all pupils an opportunity to contribute. The end result, once printed as a table, graph, pie chart, etc, could be used for a variety of follow-up activities.

Multi-skill tasks

Whilst many of the examples concentrate particularly on reading and writing skills, modern languages teachers may wish to encourage their pupils to engage in multi-skill activities. Here is an example of how a multi-skill activity can be organised, using a computer and Concept Keyboard, so as to provide differentiated learning opportunities.

This example combines speaking, listening and reading:

Pupils work in pairs. Pupil A sees and manipulates the keyboard but cannot see VDU. Pupil B can only see VDU. Half the overlay has a series of squares marked Q1, Q2, Q3, each of which when pressed reveals a question on the VDU. This is read out aloud by B and in return A has to select an appropriate answer from the remaining squares on the overlay. This reveals an answer to B, who after reading it aloud decides whether it is correct.

Clearly, the questions as well as the answers can be pitched at different levels and become gradually more complex or more open-ended.

Writing in the foreign language

Wordprocessing has the potential to allow all pupils to create accurate and legible work in the target language. Many wordprocessing packages contain accented characters with a variety of font sizes and styles. Consequently, the presentation of pupils' work can now be of the same high quality regardless of level. This clearly helps motivate and support pupils with a wide range of special needs (including slow/poor handwriters). Some wordprocessing packages enable learners to use word files or banks, e.g. pupils working on writing letters or postcard messages can select from word banks support ranging from individual items of vocabulary to whole phrases. Draft and redrafting facilities also provide valuable support.

PROMPT/WRITER (NCET) are two simple wordprocessing packages which can be used with either the Concept Keyboard or an ordinary keyboard, or both. Packages such as these allow word sets to be placed in colour coded boxes. In this way, colour coded vocabulary can help with matching questions and answers, and assist with gender, key words and difficult spellings. However, the different coloured boxes can also be used at differentiated levels so that at one level a box might contain keywords, at another additional phrases/structures and so on.

PHASES #3 (SEMERC) is a wordprocessing package which differentiates by the support it provides in terms of text size. By a simple click, text size can be changed. This device has great potential for differentiation, for example, pupils who need to work on shorter texts could have them displayed in larger type - this could provide essential visual (and psychological) support.

DTP

If pupils are working on producing a newspaper or bulletin, different contributions at different levels can be transformed into an attractive publication by using a desk top publishing package.

CD-Rom

E.g. one CD, *Autolire* (Harper Collins) provides a bank of hundreds of French reading texts at three different levels, based on NC Areas of Experience. The reading texts are supported by sound, image, a word search and dictionary facility as well as activities to develop reading strategies. Pupils can access the texts independently and select material according to personal interest and ability.
As Atkinson points out:

> *'Through the use of IT we can create a self-contained learning resource which offers students as much or as little support as they require. Such a fully differentiated environment empowers learners to direct their own classroom learning.'*

Moreover, the support referred to is not in this case human!

4. Keeping going

Having made the decision to incorporate differentiation into classroom teaching, how can teachers proceed on a more permanent basis? What are the issues which need to be addressed so that differentiation can become an integral part of a teacher's repertoire? A look at some points raised by teacher colleagues might be helpful:

Departmental organisation

Like any new initiative, it is much easier if a decision is taken to make differentiation part of departmental policy, and for all members of the department to work together as a team. If all staff are committed to the cause of differentiation, the chances of it being successful are much higher. Just as individual teachers can introduce differentiation by targeting one class at a time, so a department could target one topic of work at a time. A gradual approach would allow time for reflection and evaluation, in order to incorporate any modifications or improvements into the next topic. The NCC Non-Statutory Guidance suggests that 'differentiation becomes part of classroom practice from the start of Year 7'. The Head of Department may decide that some form of in-service training is needed, to support the introduction of differentiation. This may include: visits to other schools where differentiation is in operation to observe lessons and talk to colleagues, time to devote to the planning of differentiated activities and the creation or adaptation of materials, or attendance at an externally organised in-service course.

Preparation and planning

Having taken the decision to make differentiation a departmental policy, colleagues can then look at how a topic is to be broken down into units of work and individual lessons. Further decisions need to be made concerning where and when differentiation is to take place, which activities lend themselves to be differentiated and the type of differentiation to be used most effectively.

The NSG suggests that planning for differentiation can take place on three levels:

- Core objectives;
- Reinforcement objectives;
- Extension objectives.

The core objectives are intended for all pupils in a class, the reinforcement objectives are intended to give some pupils more intensive practice, whilst the extension objectives are to take some pupils a stage further on. It should be

noted, however, that all pupils need more intensive practice at certain times whilst learning a language, just as all pupils need the stimulus of extension work in order to experience the challenge of moving forwards.

An alternative approach would be to consider differentiation in the following way, for all pupils:

Branching work, namely extension and reinforcement, grows out of core work, taking into account the individual goals, interests and abilities of each pupil. It follows that lesson planning will include decisions regarding effective delivery of core material, and matching this to the needs of the pupils. One idea for identifying where differentiation is to occur in a lesson is to use a symbol on the plan, for example -⚠- in a distinctive colour. The lesson plan on page 25 is an example of a lesson in which differentiation occurred, and was written by a student teacher.

Periodic review of units of work will allow teachers to evaluate the differentiated opportunities available to pupils.

Lesson plan - introduction of a new unit of work

AIMS: To introduce new unit of work on schools

OBJECTIVES: To present and practise new vocabulary
Pupils to express simple preferences for school subjects

PREPARATION: Make flashcards
Devise pair work cards/sheets
Write differentiated worksheet
Prepare back-up materials

MATERIALS: Number cards, Blu-tack, white board marker, rubber.

METHOD

start of lesson
- Presentation of flashcards

activites
- Teacher-directed question/answer based on flashcards
- Pairwork (cards displayed with numbers round room)
- Further teacher-directed question/answer using ☺ J'aime and ☹ Je n'aime pas
- Pairwork with cue cards
- Differentiated worksheet

conclusion
- Miming game

back-up materials
Wordsearch
Crossword

homework: pupils write out own timetable in French

EVALUATION:

Classroom management

Much has already been written about the relationship between successful learning and effective classroom management, which it is not necessary to repeat here. However, there are two important points worth making in the context of differentiation, regarding group work and the use of teacher time:

GROUP WORK

If pupils have no experience of working in groups, they will need to learn how to move around the room quietly, get out the resources required, co-operate and listen to each other speaking. It may be necessary to establish ground rules at the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

beginning, so that pupils agree as to the best ways of proceeding. It is worth spending sufficient time setting up the procedures for working, since it will facilitate quicker progress later on.

It is the teacher's responsibility to create the right kind of working atmosphere in the classroom, where it is accepted that different pupils are working at different levels and where each pupil's contribution is valued and accepted by everybody.

It should be noted, however, that where group work or carousel work is happening in a classroom it does not necessarily mean that differentiated learning is taking place. For differentiation to take place, the pupils must be able to work at their own pace at least for some of the time. Further reference to pupil groupings and teaching styles will be found in Chapter 6.

USE OF TEACHER TIME

If organising for differentiation involves pupils working in different combinations of groupings, careful thought must be given to an effective use of the teacher's time and the variety of roles he/she can fulfil: as supporter, assessor, facilitator and co-learner (see Chapter 1, p4-5). The teacher needs also to develop a strategy for managing on-task supervision of pupils, to ensure that they cover an appropriate amount of work each lesson. This will include careful record keeping, both by the teacher and the pupils (already referred to), discussions with individual pupils on their progress, and spending equal amounts of time with all pupils over a period of time.

Resources

The resource issue is indeed a massive one to consider and can be looked at under three main headings: provision, organisation and access.

PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT

Departments might like to consider the sort of equipment needed in order to allow groups or individual pupils to work more independently, for example:

- ★ a rapid copier;
- ★ listening station(s);
- ★ individual walkmans/cassette players;
- ★ video;
- ★ computer(s).

ORGANISATION OF MATERIALS

Many existing resources can be used or adapted when planning differentiated activities; it is not necessary to spend vast amounts of time in making completely new resources. Tasks from coursebooks may be differentiated already, especially

in the case of the new courses written with the NC in mind. In other cases, texts may be suitable for use, but the tasks that go with them may need adapting, for example by simplifying or enriching. Alternatively, the texts themselves may need simplifying or rewriting, depending on the pupils' needs. Single copies of textbooks can be very useful when pupils work independently. Pupils could be asked to look up various references in different books, or extracts could be photocopied for use by several pupils. Another useful idea is the organisation of a resource bank, or 'differentiation box', in which various authentic documents, realia, articles and items of interest can be kept in clear plastic wallets, with accompanying tasks or notes. These can then be used by pupils if they have completed a task or to achieve differentiation by interest. A careful recording system should be developed so that pupils can provide evidence of materials used.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

The most important aspect is the way resources are organised to allow equal access to all pupils. Where only one computer is available, for example, pupils should be encouraged to use it on a rota-basis. Furthermore, if pupils are encouraged to develop the skills of working independently, then an easily accessible supply of dictionaries and other reference books and materials is desirable.

Assessment

The assessment of pupils' learning has always concerned teachers but never more so than at present, in the light of current changes and developments.

Whilst the GCSE offers broadly differentiated opportunities externally administered, the introduction of the National Curriculum has brought differentiation into sharper focus. As summative assessment procedures are not yet published for modern foreign languages, the current major focus lies in the here and now, the formative processes in Key Stages 3 and 4 - what goes on in classrooms on a daily basis and how it is monitored and assessed.

The NSG states that '*formative assessment is a continuous process and integral to all teaching and learning*'. It follows, therefore, that if pupils are involved in differentiated tasks, assessment procedures must take account of these. In a differentiated context, the assessment strategies selected by the teacher (or the pupils) should not only reflect the language learning experience of individual pupils, but also be appropriate for assessment purposes. This very notion challenges the traditional view of what constitutes evidence of learning, so that if pupils have been engaged in core and differentiated branching activities, it would not be appropriate to set the same end of topic 'test' for all pupils, if it did not include differentiated assessment opportunities.

Assessment procedures adopted by ML departments in different schools will vary according to departmental policy. However, the implications of providing differentiated assessment opportunities are challenging and as yet there are no ready-made solutions.

The following points have been selected from a wide range of assessment issues since they relate specifically to differentiation. For a wider discussion of assessment, readers may wish to refer to the CILT Pathfinder *Continuous assessment and recording*. Departments may find it a useful starting point to brainstorm, discuss and prioritise these considerations whilst experimenting with their own strategies:

Differentiation and:

- ★ formal tests;
- ★ continuous assessment or class-based tests;
- ★ recording pupils' progress;
- ★ marking procedures;
- ★ homework setting;
- ★ providing evidence of work.

The suggestions which follow have been collected from teachers working in a wide range of schools. These ideas arose from discussions during student supervision visits to local schools and are based on sharing successes and concerns regarding differentiation and its implications for assessment. Above all, the consensus was that the provision of differentiated learning opportunities necessarily involves the development of appropriate assessment techniques.

> *'I decide when to turn a class activity into an assessed one especially for oral work. In much the same way as primary teachers do when they hear pupils read, then I have started to operate a similar system - every time I listen to a pupil, or pairs of pupils, I record this in their individual wallets. At times it is arbitrary but we are currently working on creating a more systematic framework. It does mean that pupils are given a chance - whatever their ability - not all the tasks are the same. Afterwards I jot down a reference for the activity and sometimes relate it back to an attainment level.'*

'In class, I think it's important to give pupils different types of support - even when the activity is used as an assessment task. For a listening task, I might allow pupils to listen as often as they need to. They then note the number of times they listened on their record sheet. Pupils are no longer competing against each other but their performance is being matched by graded levels.'

'We spent a lot of time re-designing our pupil topic checklists to turn tick boxes into differentiated targets. For example, one box might read Je sais compter 1-10, *the next box might read* Je sais compter 1-20. *This means that individual pupils will tick different boxes. The completed checklists are then placed into the pupils' own wallets at the end of the topic. I think we are helping the pupils by fine-tuning the targets - making them more differentiated.'*

'I set core homework (at least once a week) and pupils set their own branching homework (usually one or two per two weeks). They keep a strict record of this in their folder/progress sheets. I was surprised that it wasn't the headache I'd envisaged - keeping track of homework set by pupils. Spot checks are also useful.'

'We invested a lot of time at the very beginning setting up our ground rules for assessment. All our year 7 pupils are fully aware of what we expect them to do as far as homework and assessed work are concerned. They are also aware of the importance of their personal portfolio - this is where they transfer selected pieces of work with help from us, as evidence of progress at the end of every topic. We have noticed a real difference between the way year 7s respond to assessment and other year groups.'

'At the front of the class folder containing individual progress sheets, I have placed at the beginning of every topic, a list of core activities which I expect every one to have covered and a range of others from which individuals might select. These are also displayed on the wall.'

ACTIVITE CHOISIE	DATE	ACCOMPLIE	DATE	REMARQUES

'Each pupil has his or her own cassette tape. The tape also provides evidence of work. I find this really useful for recording my own personal comments and messages to individuals. At first I used to try to mark all the tapes at once - this took ages. I now select about a third at any one time. Pupils know that I will listen to their tapes but are never sure when. This is now more manageable.'

'In our department we have divided assessment into two categories - formative assessment (class based including homework) and formal/summative assessment (departmental/year based).

The starting point for formative assessment is the classroom. It's up to individual teachers to select a series of class activities in all four skill areas to be used as assessments - based on the topic and the course book, tapes and worksheets. These are kept in separate plastic envelopes in a large tub. These assessment tasks are differentiated as follows:

(i) *pupils choose to do them when they feel ready;*

(ii) *not all pupils will complete the whole range of all assessment tasks but all pupils should attempt those with a red sticker (core or basic tasks);*

(iii) *pupils tick their names on sheets displayed on the classroom wall to show when they have successfully completed an assessment. The completed task when marked is filed in the individual's personal wallet;*

(iv) *reading, writing and listening tasks are often marked by the pupils using answer sheets. Pupils are also encouraged to mark each other's work. However, for each task we have developed the idea of* à l'aide *envelopes which contain additional support for pupils. On completion pupils sign on the back to say whether or not they did it with or without extra help. To date pupils have been really honest - they enjoy having that responsibility.*

The starting point for summative assessment is different. One member of the department is responsible for each topic. Using National Curriculum AT level descriptors, assessment tasks are devised which cater for a wide range of ability. They tend to get progressively harder. We are still working on this. All classes in the year do these.'

Perhaps it is appropriate at this point to examine more closely the role of differentiation within the National Curriculum.

5. Differentiation and the National Curriculum

The framework of the National Curriculum, namely the Programmes of Study and the Attainment Targets, should provide the teacher with a means of obtaining detailed knowledge of the attainment of every pupil, through careful recording of achievement and thorough documentation. This will enable the teacher to demonstrate the progression through the ATs of all pupils in the group.

The Non-Statutory Guidance refers to four types of progression:

- ★ progression in content;
- ★ progression in skills;
- ★ linguistic progression;
- ★ progression in development of cultural awareness.

Progression is achievable through the delivery of the PoS, and measurable through the reporting framework of the ATs.

Once the MFL element of the NC has worked through every year of Key Stages 3 and 4, by 1997, it is conceivable that in any one given year pupils will have reached widely different levels of attainment in all four ATs. In year 9, for example, in a mixed-ability class, some pupils may be at level 2, whilst other pupils may have reached level 6 or beyond (in the case of bilingual pupils). The implications of such a situation can appear far-reaching, which is why *'an understanding of progression in the ATs is essential for planning differentiated work'*. (NCC, February 1992)

A brief examination of the ATs and the statements of attainment on the following pages will illustrate how the concepts of differentiation and progression can be linked using examples of mixed-ability classes from various years.

It would seem that the most effective way to achieve progression is by providing differentiated learning tasks for pupils to carry out. One student teacher, reflecting on the issue of how to cater for the wide ability range in her classroom, commented that differentiation was *the only way to satisfy the demands of both the National Curriculum and the pupils.*

AT1 : Listening

TOPIC: School subjects
ACTIVITY: Recording of a pupil from a link school describing a specific school day
YEAR: 7

Level	S of A	Comment
1	b) identify individual items in a list.	From a longer list of objects, pupils tick the ones they hear mentioned.
2	b) identify and understand specific details in familiar utterances.	On an incomplete timetable for the day, pupils fill in the remaining lessons.
3	b) identify and note main points and specific details in short instructions, messages and dialogues.	On a blank timetable, pupils fill in all the details.

This example is one of differentiation by **task** using the same text for all pupils. It could be done as a class exercise, or by pupils working in groups, or by pupils working individually. The three separate tasks are all relatively simple to set up and organise.

AT2 : Speaking

TOPIC: Personal information
ACTIVITY: Role play
YEAR: 8

Level	S of A	Comment
2	b) give and find out simple information.	Pupils work in pairs, using some cue cards with symbols to exchange simple personal information.
3	b) adapt memorised words and phrases.	Pupils work in pairs using same cue cards, but taking on the persona of a famous or imaginary person.
4	b) give a short presentation or prompted talk on everyday activities, interests or future plans.	Pupils work individually or in pairs to prepare a presentation, as either themselves or as a famous or imaginary person (see above).

This example shows how differentiation can be achieved by **outcome**. All pupils can start with a basic role play card, and progress at their own pace through the three tasks. Not all pupils would be expected to attempt the presentation, which is a branching activity to stimulate the more able pupils.

AT3 : Reading

TOPIC: Holidays
ACTIVITY: Various reading tasks
YEAR: 9

Level	S of A	Comment
3	a) understand and respond to texts consisting of short, simple sentences in familiar contexts.	Pupils read an example of a pen-friend letter from a textbook and complete a list of true/false statements.
4	a) understand and respond to short, factual and non-factual texts, both printed and hand-written, which include sentences containing short clauses and some unfamiliar language.	Pupils read individual, authentic pen-friend letters from link school and compose a reply.
5	a) understand and respond to texts, including short narratives, which include some complex sentences and some unfamiliar language, using appropriate reference materials, including a bilingual dictionary.	Pupils read an article from an authentic magazine about making new friends on holiday. They then write to the author of the article about their own experiences.

This is an example of differentiation by **text**, with a series of stimuli provided by the teacher. Pupils could either be allocated to each text according to ability, or they could choose themselves a text of interest.

AT4 : Writing

TOPIC: Weather
ACTIVITY: Various written tasks
YEAR: 10

Level	S of A	Comment
4	a) write a small number of related sentences from memory to find out and convey simple information or feelings.	Pupils to write a description of the seasonal weather to send to link school.
5	a) produce a short piece of continuous writing, consisting of simple sentences, to seek and convey personal information, feelings and opinions.	Pupils to describe typical weather for each season, including personal feelings and experiences.
6	a) use simple descriptive language to write about familiar topics and experiences, including future and past events.	Pupils to write an account of a storm they were once caught in, real or imaginary.

This example shows how differentiation can work on different levels. If pupils are allowed to choose their task, differentiation by **interest** will happen. On the other hand, if the teacher allocates the pupils to a task, this would lead to differentiation by **ability**. Alternatively, each task can be tackled on different levels, resulting in differentiation by **outcome**.

6. Moving forwards: differentiation and pupil autonomy

The development of learner autonomy is often referred to as the ultimate learning goal. Autonomy is to do with encouraging learners to take responsibility for their own learning and involves:

- being clear about aims and personal goals;
- having access to an appropriate learning environment including a variety of teaching and learning styles with relevant tasks and materials;
- making informed choices through learning how to learn;
- contributing to the content, process and assessment of learning.

Despite one HMI survey claiming that little had changed in the last ten years regarding the pupils' learning experiences, there is every reason to feel optimistic.

It may be that teachers have felt restricted by examinations, syllabi and the content of language courses. However, the National Curriculum clearly emphasises learner independence. Its introduction brought with it a review of the examination system and the development of new language courses, some of which aim specifically to develop learner autonomy.

It seems that the time is right to begin developing the kinds of learning and teaching styles which encourage our learners to become more autonomous. Numerous recent and current projects echo the message that the development of autonomous learning is not only desirable but achievable* .

In *Education Observed 12*, 1989, HMI described the best lessons as those which showed *'a variety of styles and differentiation of work according to the needs and interests of individual pupils'*.

The link between differentiation and autonomous learning is clearly stated in the National Curriculum Programme of Study section, 'developing the ability to learn independently':

'Pupils should have regular opportunities to:

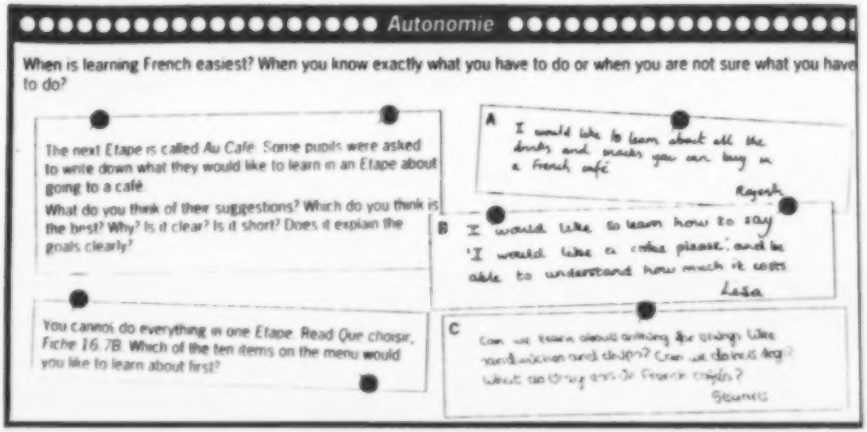
- *work independently of the teacher (on their own and with others);*
- *use a range of materials and resources;*
- *use computers;*
- *develop independence in their choice of tasks, materials and use of equipment.'*

* Calin 1993, Collaborative Learning 1989, PALM 1990.

Teachers who have started to offer some differentiated learning opportunities to their pupils are well on the way to building up an environment conducive to the development of learner autonomy. Here are some ways forward:

Being clear about aims and personal goals

Having discussed the core objectives for a particular topic with pupils, the teacher could then ask individuals to suggest some personal goals, e.g.:


Autonomie
When is learning French easiest? When you know exactly what you have to do or when you are not sure what you have to do?
The next Etape is called Au Café. Some pupils were asked to write down what they would like to learn in an Etape about going to a café.
What do you think of their suggestions? Which do you think is the best? Why? Is it clear? Is it short? Does it explain the goals clearly?
A I would like to learn about all the drinks and snacks you can buy in a French café
Rajesh
B I would like to learn how to say 'I would like a coke please' and be able to understand how much it costs
Lisa
You cannot do everything in one Etape. Read Que choisir, Fiche 16.7B. Which of the ten items on the menu would you like to learn about first?
C
Steven

M Buckby and T Huntley, *Auto*

Ask individual pupils to brainstorm ten words which they want to learn in the target language when starting a new topic. This is in effect differentiation by interest.

Creating an appropriate learning environment

No one method is likely to suit all learners all of the time. By gradually increasing the variety of teaching and learning opportunities, pupils will have the flexibility to respond to different experiences and make informed choices. Teachers may find that a gradual shift in emphasis from whole class activities (though still important) to group and paired work is more appropriate as differentiated activities increase. Every third lesson, say, may be organised as a 'branching' lesson, where pupils have a choice of activities using a variety of materials and equipment.

One teacher displayed on large wall posters the core activities which all pupils had to tackle and a range of branching activities from which pupils could select. Pupils were given a time limit (three to four weeks) but could choose which branching activities to work on and when. Core work was sometimes tackled

through whole class teaching. Another teacher with 90-minute lessons preferred to offer a range of group and paired activities within each lesson.

As teachers build up a bank of differentiated materials, all-important individualised work and pupil-teacher partnerships will develop. Although successful small group work requires very careful planning, it can give teachers the chance to direct specific work to individuals, nurture pupil choice, exploit differentiated work and, most vitally, discuss individual progress. Such teacher-led small group sessions are essential to the development of pupil independence. Little calls it 'discretionary time' and encourages teachers to find ways of creating this space with pupils during a series of lessons.

It might also be useful for teachers to examine closely the quality and organisation of group work. The following checklist can be used in the department as a basis for INSET discussion:

The answers to these questions can then lead to an exploration of the type of group activity offered in terms of **variety** and **differentiated opportunities**, and will help teachers in the creation and use of 'discretionary time'.

- ☐ How often do my pupils work in groups?
- ☐ How are the groups set up?
- ☐ What do the pupils actually do?
- ☐ How is the work differentiated?
- ☐ What do I do when pupils work in groups?
- ☐ What do I hope to achieve?
- ☐ What do my pupils think?

By gradually introducing pupils to a variety of teaching and learning styles and a variety of tasks, materials and opportunities for individual guidance, teachers are creating an environment which actively supports learner independence.

Learning how to learn

Learning how to learn helps individuals, especially less effective learners, to become more efficient and independent. Pupils who are aware of themselves as learners are more likely to be able to make informed choices which will affect the quality of their experiences. Pupils who are encouraged to ask - What am I doing? Why? How am I doing it? When? What can it be used for? - are also being encouraged to think about the learning process and accept a share in the responsibility (not always 'comfortable' for the teacher!).

The teacher's role is vital in making learning how to learn **explicit**, to focus the pupils' attention on **how** best to learn rather than simply **what** to learn. Sometimes referred to as 'learner training' (useful reference, G Ellis/B Sinclair, 1989) this process involves the teacher in assisting learners to select and concentrate on different learning strategies.

A simple example might be to do with the learning of vocabulary. Teachers could encourage pupils to experiment with different ways of learning vocabulary and then make their own evaluation, as in the example below.

I am better at learning:

Yes	No	
		★ by heart;
		★ by regular review/revision;
		★ in context;
		★ through lists (covering English then repeating ten times);
		★ through word groups;
		★ with the help of music or rhythms;
		★ with the help of personal lists from a brainstorm session.

Another example might involve information seeking. Teachers could emphasise over a period of time different ways of 'finding things out' using a range of resources or people. At the end of that time, pupils could list the different resources and methods in terms of appropriateness and effectiveness. 'Learning how to learn' acknowledges that individuals will need different learning experiences - differentiation plays a key role.

Autonomie

C'est génial, oui ou non?

How did you get on with the last section? Had you learnt everything you set out to learn? No?
Try this section. It will give you handy hints on what to do next.

1 People sometimes have problems with learning. Read what Lucy, a young English girl, says:

A
I can't say the new words properly.
B
I can't remember some of the new words.
I can't understand the people on the cassette.
I sometimes get stuck when I see a word I don't know.
C
D

What about you and your friends? Write a list of problems that you have. Why don't you write one each?

2 Here are some suggestions made by Lucy's friends.
★ Try and guess what new words mean. Do they look like English words?
★ Practise saying new words with a partner or with your teacher. Record yourself!
★ Copy new words out five times, then test yourself. Try again two days later!
★ Ask your teacher if you can listen to the cassette again.
★ Don't panic! You may not have to understand everything. The key words are in the *Tu te rappelles?* section.

Which problem (**A**, **B**, **C** or **D**) does each suggestion match?

3 Can you and your friends add any more useful suggestions? Write them down in your exercise book and use them.

4 Select activities to help you. Decide when and where you will do them. At home? In class? With a friend?

Bonne chance!
Et maintenant, regarde *Tu te rappelles?*

M Buckby and T Huntley, *Auto*

Pupil involvement in the content, process and assessment of learning

If pupils are to become confident, independent language learners (whatever their ability!), they must feel involved in their own learning. Initially, achieving this may be a question of balance between:

- ★ core and branching;
- ★ class/group work and individual activities;
- ★ teacher-led and pupil-led activities;
- ★ teacher-selected and pupil-selected materials and resources;
- ★ teacher assessment and peer/individual assessment;
- ★ free choice and guided choice ... and so on.

Individual departments can prioritise, select from and add to the list depending on the teachers' interests and the pupils they are targeting.

However, taking responsibility for their learning and contributing actively to that process may not come 'naturally' to pupils. They will need to be taught.

On the following pages a simple example illustrates how pupils might be encouraged to become more involved in their learning is taken from *Auto* (M Buckby and T Huntley), a French coursebook (Key Stages 3/4) which explicitly aims to develop pupil autonomy. In Book 1 (Year 7) pupils are taught:

- how to set their own learning goals;
- to write an action plan of how they are going to achieve these goals;
- to assess their performance;
- to evaluate the processes used.

By involving learners in these processes, pupils will become more confident and motivated - whatever their ability - to accept a share in the learning of a foreign language with their teachers and peers. Gradually, individuals will be encouraged to take on more responsibility to direct those processes - which by their very nature will be differentiated - and eventually become independent learners.

If teachers regard the development of pupil autonomy as an integral part of the teaching and learning process, not only will they involve their pupils to a greater extent but also satisfy specific requirements of the National Curriculum.

Autonomie

Look back at the activities in *Tu comprends maintenant?* Which one from each section (1A or 1B, etc.) do you think helped you best to check that you had learned everything? It is a good idea to write a list of these activities in your exercise book. (Remember, you started a section called *Autonomie* in the *7ème Etape*.) Why is it a good idea? This list of activities that you find are best for you will be useful for you to refer to when practising new language and checking that you have learnt everything.

Tu te rappelles?

Now you know how to:

■ understand people talking about their pets	J'ai un lapin. Il est grand et il est blanc.	I've got a rabbit. It is big and it is white.
	Moi, j'ai un chien. Il s'appelle Bonney. Il est noir.	I've got a dog. He is called Bonney. He is black.
	J'ai aussi deux chats.	I have also got two cats.
■ ask someone if they have got a pet	Tu as un animal?	Have you got a pet? [talking to a friend or someone who is younger]
	Vous avez un animal?	Have you got a pet? [talking to an adult]
	Tu as une tortue?	Have you got a tortoise?
■ talk about your pets	Non, mais j'ai un oiseau. Il est petit.	No, but I have got a bird. It is small.
	Moi, j'ai un insecte. Il s'appelle Rocky.	I've got an insect. It is called Rocky.
	J'ai deux hamsters et une gerbille. Elle s'appelle Mimi. Elle est petite.	I've got two hamsters and a gerbil. It is called Mimi. It is small.
	J'ai un poisson. J'ai aussi une tortue. Elle est brune et noire. Elle est grande.	I've got a fish. I've also got a tortoise. It is brown and black. It is big.

Autonomie

You can use the *Tu te rappelles?* section to help you practise and revise the language in this *Etape*.

Try this activity:

- ★ Copy out the phrases in the middle column onto small pieces of paper or card: one phrase on each piece of paper.
- ★ Put all the phrases into an envelope, so that they are all mixed up. Then try to build them into a conversation that makes sense. How quickly can you do this?
- ★ Now ask your friend to have a go. Who is the quickest?

Extra!

You could also try seeing how many different dialogues you can make using these phrases.

Autonomie

In the *16ème Etape* you selected a list of things that you would like to learn in an *Etape* called *Au café*.

- Did this help you learn the things you wanted to?
- How did it help you?
  - Did it make things clear?
  - Did it help you to learn?
  - Did it stop you learning too much at once?

The next *Etape* is called *On va sortir?* It is all about making plans to go out.

- Write a list of ten things that you would like to learn in an *Etape* about making arrangements to go out.
- Keep the list safe and use it to help you learn.

I would like to be able to say, "Would you like to go to the cinema on Saturday?"
I would like to learn how to talk about things I like doing: "Let's go to the swimming pool."

Tu te rappelles?

Now you know how to:

■ ask someone what they like or what they would like to eat or drink	Qu'est-ce que tu prends?	What will you have?
	Tu prends un café crème?	Are you going to have a coffee with milk?
	Tu aimes les frites?	Do you like chips?
■ say what you like or what you will have	Oui, mais je préfère les omelettes.	Yes, but I prefer omelettes.
	Je prends un hot-dog et une limonade.	I'll have a hot dog and a lemonade.
■ order snacks and drinks	Je voudrais un coca cola et un sandwich au fromage, s'il vous plaît.	I would like a coke and a cheese sandwich, please.
	Pour moi, un café et un sandwich au jambon.	For me . . .a coffee and a ham sandwich.
	Et moi, je prends un orangina, s'il vous plaît.	And I'll have an orangina, please.
■ ask how much it is	Ça fait combien?	How much is it?
■ understand the price	Ça fait 24 francs.	It is 24 francs.
■ say thank you	Merci.	Thank you.

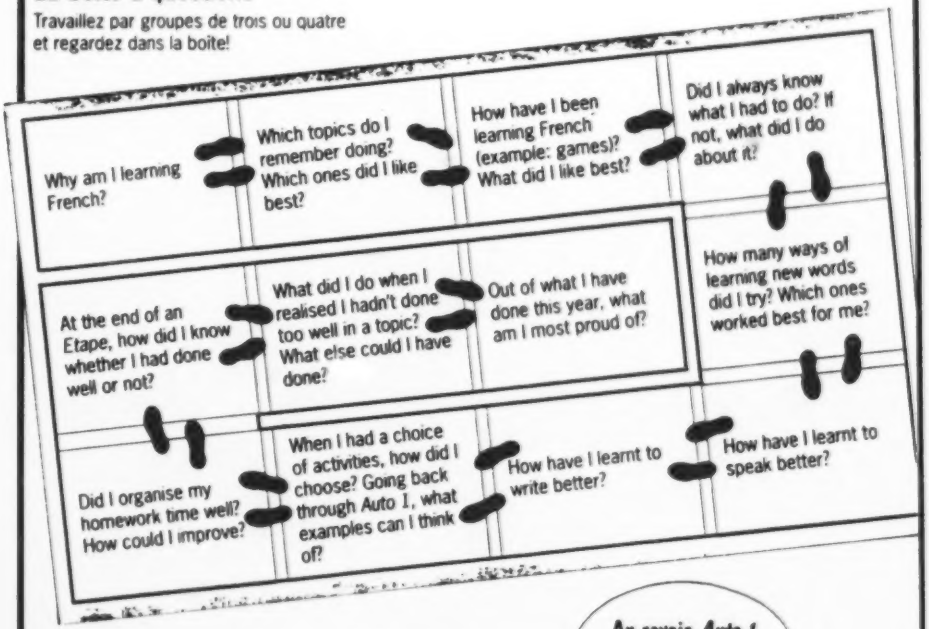
Autonomie

Bravo! Tu as fini *Auto 1*! Avec *Auto* le français c'est amusant!

With *Auto 1*, you have learnt many things and tried many different ways of learning them. What is best is what works for you. Do you know what works best for you? Now is the time to find out.

La boîte à questions

Travaillez par groupes de trois ou quatre et regardez dans la boîte!


Why am I learning French?
Which topics do I remember doing? Which ones did I like best?
How have I been learning French (example: games)? What did I like best?
Did I always know what I had to do? If not, what did I do about it?
At the end of an Etape, how did I know whether I had done well or not?
What did I do when I realised I hadn't done too well in a topic? What else could I have done?
Out of what I have done this year, what am I most proud of?
How many ways of learning new words did I try? Which ones worked best for me?
Did I organise my homework time well? How could I improve?
When I had a choice of activities, how did I choose? Going back through Auto 1, what examples can I think of?
How have I learnt to write better?
How have I learnt to speak better?

Now that you have taken stock, get ready for *Auto 2*.

To conclude

Educators have always been aware of the need to differentiate. Yet as that understanding increases so, too, does the role played by teachers in defining and refining the nature of differentiation.

As one teacher commented:

> *'It is giving me something to aim for. Pupils need to be working at **their** level and not struggling with something that is far too hard or stagnating over something they could do quickly and easily. By using differentiation, each child can see what they **are** achieving by finishing tasks appropriate to their needs. This also aids motivation and individual pride. I am really glad that I am having to cope with the idea of differentiation and take it on board!'*

In this Pathfinder we have tried to show that taking on differentiation is not a daunting task, and that many teachers are already creating differentiated learning opportunities in their classrooms instinctively. We hope that the ideas in this book will serve as a suitable starting point, from which teachers will rapidly and confidently come up with their own, better ideas.

Finally, the following checklist serves as a summary of the main points contained in this book and could form an action plan for...

... taking the initiative ...

Getting started	• take a critical look at current practice; • target one group of pupils; • create short-term objectives; • use simple examples from four skill areas.
Developing tasks	• consider range of abilities and interests of pupils in target group; • select variety of tasks and match to appropriate type of differentiation; • investigate possibilities of incorporating IT; • have a go at adapting a selection of published materials.
Keeping going	• put it on the agenda: discussion point at department meeting; • share planning and preparation of core/branching work with colleagues; • experiment with pupil groupings; • audit of resources - potential for differentiation?; • create a differentiated test.
Moving forwards	• long-term objectives: create departmental policy; • plan and hold INSET day; • select one group to work towards autonomy; • review and evaluate procedures to date.

Key titles and sources

Anderson J, V Harris, H Stanyer and G Walker, *Flexible learning project*, NCET, 1990.

Atkinson T, *Hands off! It's my go*, CILT/NCET, 1992

Barthorpe T and J Visser, *Differentiation: your responsibility*, NARE, 1991.

Blamire R (ed), *Languages for all - IT in modern language learning for children with special needs*, NCET, 1991.

Buckby M, T Huntley, *Auto - Livre d'étudiant 1* and *Auto 1 - Teacher's resource book*, Collins Educational, 1992.

Churchman L, *Information Technology in the National Curriculum: modern language teaching*, Notts LEA/NCET, 1992.

Dickinson L, *Learner autonomy 2: learner training for language learning*, Authentik, 1992

Ellis G and B Sinclair, *Learning to learn English: a course in learner training*, CUP, 1989.

Gathercole I (ed), *Autonomy in language learning* (with video), CILT, 1992.

Hurren C, *Departmental planning and schemes of work* - Pathfinder 11, CILT, 1992.

King L, *Graded objectives and the National Curriculum* - GOML News 15, CILT, 1991.

Little D, *Learner autonomy 1: definitions, issues and problems*, Authentik, 1989.

Modern language information files (IT), NCET, 1990-1993.

Page B, *Letting go, taking hold - a guide to independent language learners by teachers for teachers*, CILT, 1992.

KS3 teacher assessment MFL - Information leaflet, SEAC, 1992.

Stradling R et al, *Differentiation in action*, HMSO, 1991.

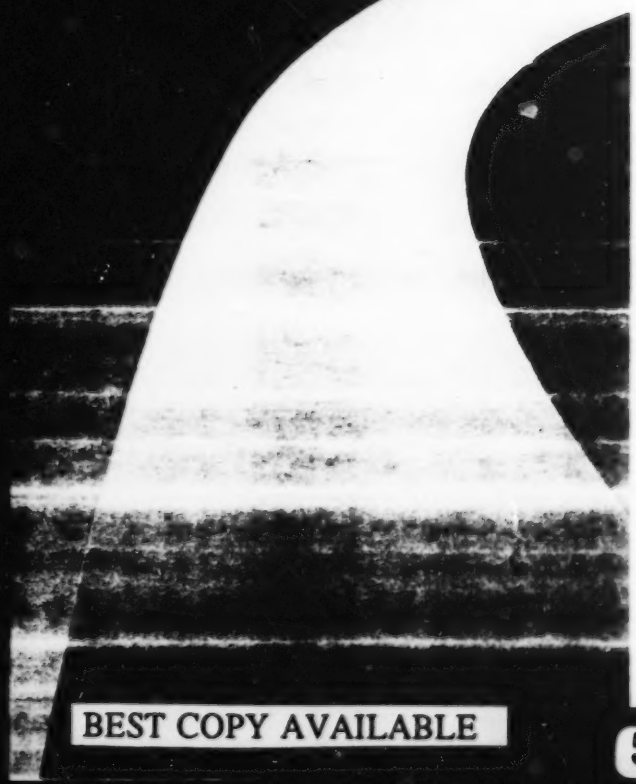
Differentiating the secondary curriculum package, Wilts CC, 1991, including twenty-one booklets and video.

5 *Computers*, Brodie T and I Butterworth
9 *Producing your own educational material*, McAsey D
12 *Base lining*, Hill T
17 *Assessment: the window on learning*, Hanson
18 *Marking written work*, Garnett J
20 *Senior Management team*, Long L

An excellent comprehensive package.

A CILT series for language teachers

Pathfinder 18



This book shows how it is possible for all teachers to provide differentiated learning opportunities, whatever their circumstances.

It demonstrates how differentiation can be developed from current teaching practice, involving teachers in making decisions regarding core work and branching work in order to take account of individual pupils' goals, interests and abilities.

Do Coyle and Anne Convery work as teacher trainers at the University of Nottingham. They have spent the past year developing ideas related to differentiated learning and in particular in the field of Special Needs and Autonomy.

ISBN 1 874016 18 6

BEST COPY AVAILABLE